

REGULATION OF TRIBAL CASINOS

In the fall of 1988, President Reagan signed into law the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA). This Federal Act confirmed the rights of tribes to conduct gaming on Tribal lands through agreements with the state (Tribal-State Gaming Compacts) and established a statutory framework for the regulation of Indian Gaming. The result is that Washington State Tribes have three agencies involved in the regulation of their Tribal casinos.

- The **National Indian Gaming Commission** is the federal agency responsible for regulation of gaming on Indian lands. It has established the federal standards for gaming on Indian lands called the Minimum Internal Control Standards.
- The **Washington State Gambling Commission** was given authority to regulate gaming on Tribal lands through provisions contained in Tribal-State Compacts. The Tribal-State Compacts establish the foundation of a regulatory partnership that exists between the State and each compacted Tribe.
- In addition, each Tribe must establish a **Tribal Gaming Commission/Agency** to regulate all Tribal gaming operations. The Tribal-State Gaming Compact requires an agent to be onsite during all gaming hours. Tribal Gaming Agencies are responsible for enforcement of the National Indian Gaming Commission's Minimum Internal Control Standards, Tribal-State Compact provisions, and all Tribal ordinances and regulations.

If you have questions about tribal gaming or a specific tribal casino, please contact our Tribal Gaming Unit at tribalgamingunit@wsgc.wa.gov or at (800) 345-2529, extension 3581.

TYPES OF INDIAN GAMING

The Indian Gaming Regulatory Act created three classes of "Indian gaming" and provides a different regulatory scheme for each class. Under the Act, if the activity is allowed in the state, the Tribes may offer it.

- Class III (Nevada-style) gaming includes activities such as lotteries, casino games, house-banked card games, horse racing, pari-mutuel wagering, off-track betting, keno and machine gaming.
- "Class II" gaming includes bingo, pull-tabs, punch boards, tip jars and other games similar to bingo. Card games that are not banked by the house are considered Class II. Regulation of these games is within tribal jurisdiction, subject to oversight by the National Indian Gaming Commission.
- Traditional or ceremonial "Class I" gaming remains within the exclusive jurisdiction of the Indian tribes. These are social games played solely for prizes of minimal value or traditional forms of Indian gaming connected with tribal ceremonies or celebrations